

Little Stars Day Nursery

24 Chancellor Road, SOUTHEND-ON-SEA, SS1 2AS

Inspection date

27/01/2014

Previous inspection date

04/03/2010

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

2

Previous inspection:

2

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend	2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children	2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision	2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- Children make good progress in their learning and development, particularly in the prime areas, and are well prepared for the next stages in learning.
- Children's independence and social skills are well promoted by staff who have a good understanding of the principles of how children learn and develop.
- Every child is well known and their unique characteristics recognised, enabling care to be tailored to meet their individual needs very well. The effective partnership with parents contributes positively to children's time at the nursery.
- The management team and staff work well together, and are forward thinking, embracing new ideas and bringing about improved outcomes for children.
- Safeguarding is given a high priority, ensuring children are well-protected from harm or abuse, and parents are fully aware of the nursery's policy and procedures.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Children have fewer opportunities for open-ended, creative play and problem-solving, using found or recycled materials.
- Rooms for babies and toddlers are busy and lack cosy dens for them to crawl into and experience sensory play or be quiet and reflective.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities and interacted with children in the playrooms and in the soft play area.
- The inspector held discussions with the provider and the manager, and carried out a joint observation with a room leader.
- The inspector viewed a sample of documentation including evidence of staff checks and qualifications, some policies, planning sheets and children's assessments and development profiles.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents spoken to during the inspection and within surveys issued by the nursery.

Inspector

Sarah Williams

Full report

Information about the setting

Little Stars Day Nursery opened in 2009 and is privately owned and managed. The nursery is situated in a converted domestic property over three floors and is located in Southend on Sea, Essex. It is one of two early years nurseries managed by the provider. There is an enclosed area for outside play. There are currently 39 children on roll, of whom 37 are in the early years age range. The nursery receives funding for the provision of free early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It is open from 7am to 7pm. Monday to Friday all year round. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 10 staff, all of whom have appropriate early years qualifications, seven staff hold a level 3 qualification, and two hold a level 2. The provider has a teaching qualification and the manager has an early years degree. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. The nursery receives support from the local authority development team and holds an accreditation from the pre-school learning alliance.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- introduce more open-ended and natural play options, both indoors and outside, making use of found and recycled materials to inspire children's imagination and creativity, and to develop their problem-solving skills
- review the layout of care spaces used for babies and toddlers to incorporate suitably resourced cosy dens and alternative, quieter environments for children to explore using all their senses.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Overall, children make good progress in their learning and development and are well-prepared for the next stages in their education. They are enthusiastic learners, demonstrating their confidence to try new things and take part in all activities. Staff plan individually tailored activities and learning experiences based on their observations and children's interests. Children attend from a wide range of cultural backgrounds and many speak English as an additional language. Staff sensitively promote all children's communication skills and language development, incorporating their home vocabulary and using gesture, pictorial cues, songs and rhymes to help children feel comfortable and confident to express their ideas and feelings. Young children happily sing favourite songs,

such as the alphabet song, as they play with building blocks or prepare some food with the play kitchen props. Staff praise them and clap, making the children beam with pride.

Children are cared for in age-based rooms, with sufficient resources suitable for their different stages of development. Currently, the balance is towards manufactured toys and there are fewer open-ended and natural materials and resources. This results in fewer opportunities for children to use their imagination and creative thinking, as well as problem-solving skills. Play is largely child initiated and children confidently move between different areas, selecting resources and accessing activities they are interested in. For example, they enjoy fishing for shapes in the water tray, and using the play kitchen, dolls and dressing up clothes for role play. Additionally, staff plan focused activities based on topics, such as 'the world', which promote children's understanding of diverse cultures of children and families, through food and stories. Children develop an understanding of their local community as they make regular visits to the library to borrow books and attend story sessions. They also use local amenities, such as, the park and beach, which are within walking distance. More structured outings are an annual feature, when parents join children and staff on a trip, for example, to a butterfly safari.

Staff use effective teaching strategies and plan individually tailored activities and learning experiences based on their observations and children's interests. Staff find out about children's stage of development and achievements when they first start to attend, by talking to parents and completing a base line assessment in the early days. This enables them to begin a carefully tailored programme for each child, with carefully thought out and appropriately challenging next steps, to help them make progress towards the early learning goals. Parents are included at every stage, reviewing and contributing to all the written stage reports, and by having daily informal conversations with their child's key person. Children's progress is effectively tracked by the staff, enabling them to secure additional support for any children who are not reaching expected levels. The progress check for children aged two is shared with parents, to ensure they know what they can do to further help their child with learning at home.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

A strength of the nursery is the consideration given to promoting children's emotional well-being and sense of belonging. Children of all ages show clear attachments and affectionate bonds with staff and their key person. Babies readily approach their key person for cuddles and to point to, or ask for, what they want; 'bubbles, bubbles' says a baby, pointing to where he can see the bubble pot on a shelf. This results in confident, happy children who engage fully in their surroundings, playing and learning well. The key person builds a relationship with the family, finding out about children's home routine, feeding, sleep patterns and any health or medical needs. Staff work with parents to help move children through the stages of development, such as, weaning and potty training. All achievements are recorded in the children's development profiles. A new initiative in the nursery is the 'star of the week' award, given to one child in both the pre-school room and the toddlers' room. This celebrates children's individual achievements and forges links with home as parents are given a certificate to display at home, matching the one displayed in the nursery. Children behave well because they are easily able to understand and follow

the expectations of staff. For example, staff help children take turns with popular items, such as the play mobile phones and help them to put on aprons for water and messy play explaining why they need to do so.

Allergies and medical needs are displayed in the kitchen, and in each room, so children only receive suitable foods, keeping them safe and healthy. Meals are prepared in-house with an emphasis on fresh ingredients, and fewer processed foods. The menus, which are displayed for parents, are nutritionally balanced and offer children appealing meals and snacks to keep their energy levels up and help them grow. They can access fresh drinking water throughout the day and staff offer milk to those who like it. Babies' milk feeds are stored in a fridge and given in accordance with their routine needs. Children are involved in selecting snack items and preparing them on occasion, such as, spreading crackers and making sandwiches. They also wash up their own plates, and enjoy doing 'real' tasks as they receive praise for helping, boosting their self-esteem.

Children have outdoor play every day as this is seen as key to keeping them healthy and promoting physical development. The nursery has a paved outside play area equipped with a range of physical play resources, such as, stepping stones, balls, and some wheeled toys. The manager has identified the garden as an area for development and has plans in place for expanding the range of choices for children and making the area more visually appealing. Children also enjoy outings to various local open spaces and parks and are well situated to visit the beach, where they can explore nature and the changing seasons. Babies are taken for walks so they can benefit from different sights and sounds, promoting their curiosity and sense of wonder in their environment. Many photographs are displayed around the nursery, so children can see themselves and their friends, and enjoy recalling outings and fun activities.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision

All staff have undergone safeguarding training and the manager has attended a higher level training course to enable her to take a key role for child protection within the nursery. Children are safeguarded as robust and well thought out recruitment procedures ensure that all adults caring for them are suitably qualified and experienced and understand the nursery's policy and procedures. Parents are shown the child protection policy, along with all the nursery policies and procedures, so they can be reassured that their child is safe and that any concerns will be promptly dealt with. The manager has a thorough understanding of the need to notify Ofsted of a significant event. However, on one occasion, she overlooked the need to notify the required agencies of a safeguarding incident in a timely manner. The nursery have learnt a valuable lesson from this incident and in the future will be much clearer about what to report to Ofsted and other agencies and in what time frame.

The nursery has recently undergone some changes to the management team. The new manager is working closely with the provider to evaluate all aspects of the nursery practice. She has formulated a development programme with realistic and achievable aims, designed to improve the outcomes for children and promote staff's personal and

professional development. The quality of teaching is monitored by the manager. She has introduced clearer and more manageable record keeping methods, so staff can track and record their key children's progress. Observations of staff working within the rooms, and peer observations, also contribute to maintaining a high standard of teaching and learning. As well as tracking their academic progress, key staff keep an eye on children's well-being and comment upon this within the development profiles. Where they can help children achieve more, or develop a better approach to their learning, they bring in strategies to do so. Staff undergo regular supervision sessions and an annual appraisal. This enables any areas for development to be addressed and training put into place, if required. Additionally, staff may identify areas of interest which they would like to explore through courses, and where possible these are provided. The owner and manager understand that raising the overall qualification level among the staff team brings positive results for children. They welcome students from the local college, some of whom stay on and become members of the team. Staff report that they feel supported and appreciated, and that the manager is approachable and will help them with any issues they may have in the workplace.

Many approaches go towards developing an effective partnership with parents. From the earliest days, the key person will communicate with parents and carers to ensure all crucial information is shared. For children who attend other early years settings, including childminders, provision is made to exchange details so that care is continuous and complementary activities are included. Where children are identified as needing additional support to reach expected levels, the nursery's special educational needs coordinator liaises with outside professionals, as well as parents, to secure this in a timely fashion. This ensures that children are all included and their needs are met, helping them to benefit fully from their time at nursery. Children's transitions, for example, to primary school when the time comes, are well thought out and planned for. Most children receive a visit from their reception class teacher and, on occasion, their key person will accompany them on a visit to the new school so they can start to build links and allay any anxieties. Children begin to build the independence skills they need to manage their own belongings and self-care routines, so that they are well prepared for their new setting. Parents are kept informed with regular newsletters detailing any staff changes, topics for the weeks ahead and appeals for any resources they may be able to contribute. A notice board in the entrance hallway has details of current topics, and there is a section with leaflets and literature relating to childcare related matters. This includes healthy eating, places to go with children locally and various support services. Parents say they find staff approachable and appreciate the support for their families. A suggestions box allows parents to present any ideas they may have and they also complete regular surveys, the results of which are analysed by the senior management. Action is taken where possible and parents' views inform the nursery's evaluation and reflective processes. One parent says that the nursery care of both her children, including her school age child who is picked up every day, enables her to work, knowing that her children are in safe hands, well cared for and happy.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are

Met

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected again within six months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY398236
Local authority	Southend on Sea
Inspection number	952340
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	40
Number of children on roll	39
Name of provider	Chung Chan Hoang
Date of previous inspection	04/03/2010
Telephone number	01702 614615

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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